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The Larboard Fin;

OR, TWELVE MONTHS SINCE:

A NAUTICAL DRAMA IN THREE ACTS,

By W. H. WILLS, Esq.

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With Remarks, Biographical & Critical,

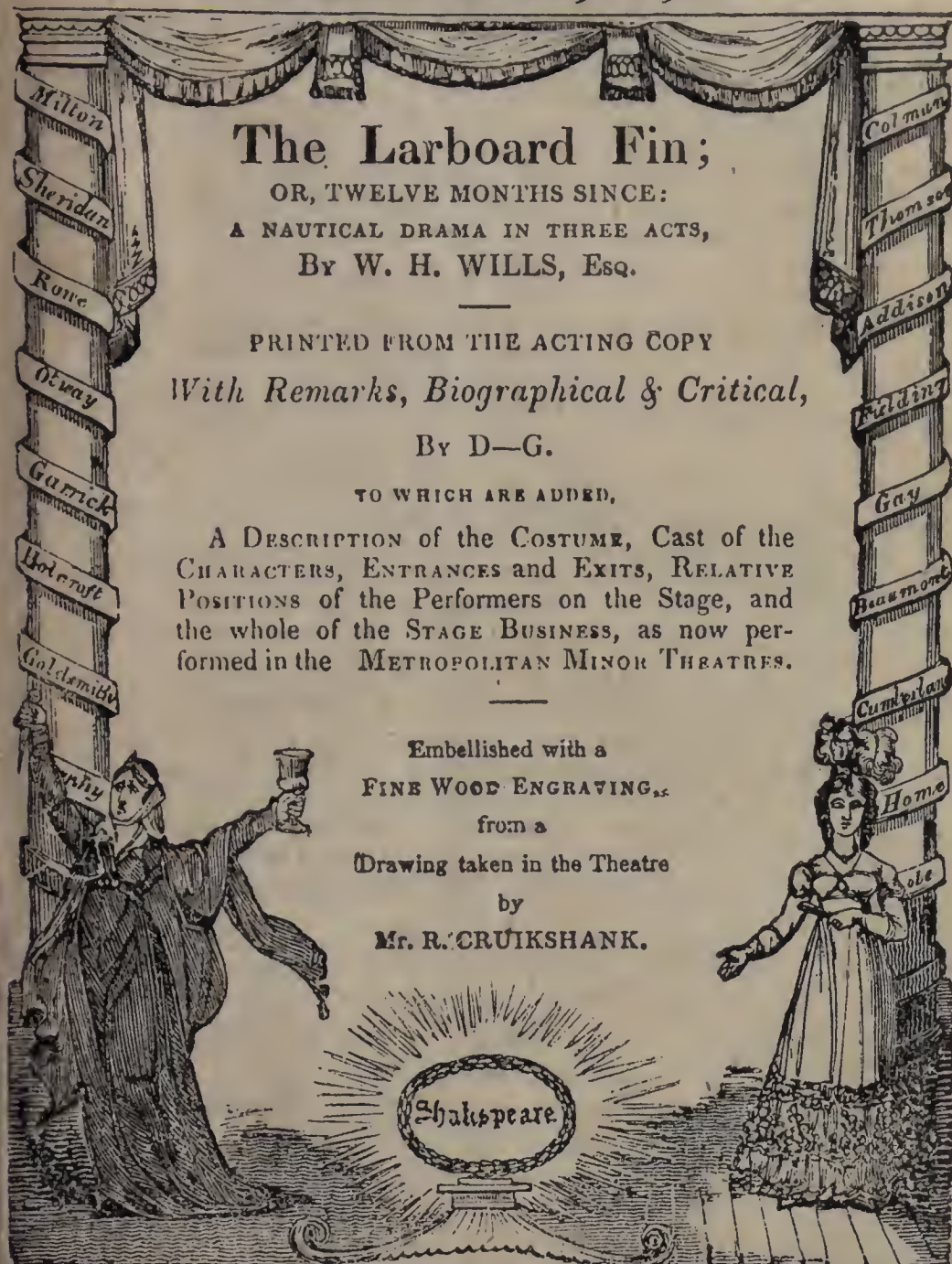
By D—G.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

A DESCRIPTION of the COSTUME, Cast of the CHARACTERS, ENTRANCES and EXITS, RELATIVE POSITIONS of the Performers on the Stage, and the whole of the STAGE BUSINESS, as now performed in the METROPOLITAN MINOR THEATRES.

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The Larboard Fin.

Bob Stay. Hurra! the Larboard Fin! Come out of your rat-hole, you varm nt! I'll riddle your hull for ye, I will! you piratical, false-swearing, smuggling son of a shore-going shark!—Surrender!

Act III. Scene 4,

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REMARKS.

The Larboard Fin.

GREAT crimes have most commonly great incentives. He is but a superficial observer of human character who looks only to the effect, without inquiring into the cause; who traces vice to no other source than the love of it; and pours condemnation where there may be much to mitigate, and more to pity.

If there be one feeling more devoted and intense, that twines itself around the heart with undying tenacity, 'tis a father's affection for his child. What, then, shall reconcile him to his destruction by an act of falsehood and injustice? What satiate his revenge against the wanton perpetrator?

On no grounds can vengeance be defended; yet the spirit, broken by oppression, can hardly be expected to philosophise. The gall may be on the tip of the tongue, but not in the heart: a lash given to the soul will provoke more than the body's most cruel torture.

Has not vengeance sometimes proved the indirect instrument of justice? The tyrants of mankind might revel unrestrained in the mad fury of their career, but for the occasional demonstration of its powerful arm. The flagitious wrong-doer may boast that he is above the law; but vengeance is above him, and its bolt is retribution.

Let the proud man beware how he wounds the feelings of his inferior fellow-man. Trifle not with the heart's bitterness. Impunity has its limit. A flint will show fire when you strike it.

In early life, the wrecker had been honest and humane, but a storm suddenly burst over his household. His only son, the joy of his manhood—the fondly-anticipated prop of his old age, was accused of murder; condemned on the evidence of a perjured witness; the haughty magistrate, in whose power lay pardon or death, sternly refused to listen to the passionate entreaties of the heart-broken parents; and the youth suffered the extreme penalty of the law. Disgraced, blighted, desperate—deaf to remonstrance and remorse—indifferent to the world's censure, for the world had done its worst to *him*,—Cann, the wrecker, became one of a gang of lawless men, who haunt the sea-shore on stormy nights, and when the perishing mariner cries for help in the tempest, completes, with murderous hand, what the waves and rocks have left undone.

The clouds gather over the desolate coast where stands his solitary dwelling, a low house of entertainment for seamen and smugglers; the rain descends in torrents; the thunder roars; and the lightning

discovers, by its lurid glare, a frail bark rocking amidst the billows, and firing signal-guns of distress. The hurricane rages with redoubled fury; and, see! the good ship has not a rag nor a splinter left—a sheer hulk! Another lurch!—She founders!—Hark! 'tis the cry of the drowning wretches! 'Tis music to the wrecker—his harvest hymn!

But his daughter, a gentle maid, who had anxiously followed him, distant and unseen, in his midnight wanderings, resolves upon this occasion to discard or confirm her fearful suspicions. In the hurry and tumult of a general rush by torch-light to the sea-shore, she succeeds in gaining a hiding place behind a projecting rock. At this moment, a stranger is dashed from the wreck upon the beach, grasping firmly a packet. Cann attacks him; the stranger loses his sword, and is on the point of being overpowered, when Frederick Dervanion, a naval officer, who had hastened to the scene, snatches up the sword, and manfully interposes. The wrecker fires his pistol; the stranger falls; Frederick and his adversary engage in a desperate combat; in the midst of which, one Bob Stay, a rattling Jack tar, gives Cann a cut across his left arm (his Larboard Fin!); the wounded ruffian escapes in the darkness, but not without being fatally recognised by his distracted child as a murderer.

The packet is presented by the dying man to Frederick as a reward for his valour; the sword, for which he had fought so nobly, is already his own.

Twelve months elapse, and the same parties are again by accident brought together. Colonel Travers, the magistrate who had denied mercy to the innocently-condemned; Julia, his niece; Frederick, her lover; Mary, the wrecker's daughter; Bob Stay, to whom she is affianced; and the miserable, melancholy Cann.

Twenty years has the wrecker brooded vengeance; but vengeance has hitherto kept aloof from him. Now 'tis within his grasp!

Frederick, promoted to the rank of captain, having at length overcome the colonel's scruples as to his mysterious paternity, is about to be united to Julia; and Bob Stay, with a purse well stuffed with prize-money, proposes on the same happy occasion to make Mary the willing wife of a sailor. While hope and joy are in full activity, Cann appears with constables and a notary to arrest the captain on a charge of murder! The stranger's sword hangs by his side; the casket of rich jewels he has just handed to his ladye-love, as a marriage present; his sudden departure after that fatal night is made a cause of grave suspicion against him; and, lest this circumstantial evidence should fail, the wrecker stands forward to swear that he himself saw Frederick Dervanion pistol the stranger.

The oppressed may now turn upon the oppressor. To trial shall the culprit go—and to the gibbet! as did his beloved and innocent son!

Then may Heaven send the prisoner a good deliverance! Indeed! Good deliverance to a murderer! The magistrate uttered no such prayer twenty years ago!

One word more, and the proud man's heart shall die within him. He had a son; that infant son was placed under the care of the bereaved mother who mourned her martyred child. 'Twas reported he was drowned—a merciful fate! Unknown to his wife, the wrecker sent him away to a remote part of Cornwall's dreary coast; associated him with smugglers and plunderers; but the boy, hating his mode of life, escaped, joined a man-of-war's company, and, by his good conduct and valour, raised himself to the rank of Post-Captain.—Where is this miracle of youthful virtue triumphing over adverse circumstances?—This long-lost son?

“*There!*” And the magistrate, with burning brow and hollow, glazed eye, beholds Frederick Dervanion, manacled, and guarded by soldiers, passing to his trial!

But his good genius interposes to save him. Mary threatens to denounce her guilty father as the murderer, unless he promises to aid the prisoner's escape. What! forego twenty years' hoped-for vengeance, at the moment 'tis within his power? She reiterates her threat; the terrified old man complies; he repairs to the secret pass under the Eagle's Tower, and, in attempting to open a trap that leads from the cave, his Larboard Fin is seen by Bob Stay, (whose errand to the cavern is to conduct Julia to her lover) on which is engraved the deeply-cut and well-remembered scar. This fortunate discovery points out the real culprit, who, after a grand combat with the tough tar, dies of remorse and a bullet in his side.

Mr. T. P. Cooke threw his best energies into the part of Bob Stay, and fought, danced, and did the nautical needfuls, with his accustomed spirit and effect. A tippling tapster, Simon Swipes, reeled and hiccaped like a true son of Bacchus; and Mrs. Henner was alternately playful and pathetic in the wrecker's daughter.

Little Keeley was *starring* it at the Chelmsford theatre, where Peake's farce of “The Hundred Pound Note” was being played to an empty house. In the last scene he came forward to the stage-lights, and said, “I've *one* more conundrum, and this is a good 'un. Why is the Chelmsford theatre like the half-moon? D'ye give it up? Because it's *never full!*”

This applies not to the Surrey, which was crowded to the ceiling to behold and applaud “The Larboard Fin.”



D.—G.

Cast of the Characters,

As performed at the Surrey Theatre, April, 1837.

<i>Colonel Travers (Governor of a Fort in Cornwall)</i>	}	Mr. Dibdin Pitt.
<i>Frederick Dervanion (an Officer in the Navy)</i>		
<i>Bob Stay (a Seaman under his command)</i>	}	Mr. T. P. Cooke.
<i>Simon Swipes (Servant to Colonel Travers)</i>		
<i>Cann (a Wrecker, and Landlord of "The Dolphin")</i>	}	Mr. Lyon.
<i>First Wrecker</i>		
<i>Second Wrecker</i>		Mr. Priorson.
<i>Second Wrecker</i>		Mr. R. Green.
<i>A Stranger (Shipwrecked on the Coast)</i>	}	Mr. Cullen.
<i>Corporal</i>		
<i>Town Clerk</i>		Mr. Green.
<i>Town Clerk</i>		Mr. Dixie.
<i>Julia (Niece to Colonel Travers)</i> ...		Miss Grant.
<i>Mary (her Attendant, and Daughter of Cann)</i>	}	Mrs. R. Honner.
<i>Constables, Villagers, Soldiers, Wreckers, Smugglers, &c.</i>		

SCENE—On the Coast of Cornwall.

Costume.

COLONEL TRAVERS.—Blue coat, faced with gold lace—epaulettes—cocked-hat and feathers—military boots—sword, &c.

FREDERICK DERVANION.—*First dress*: Uniform of a Naval Lieutenant. *Second dress*: Naval Captain's uniform.

BOB STAY.—*First dress*: Blue jacket—white trousers—shoes—straw hat. *Second dress*: Blue jacket, with an anchor worked upon the arm—blue trousers—glazed hat.

SIMON SWIPES.—Livery coat—red breeches—hat, with a cockade.

CANN.—A Cornish fisherman's dress.

STRANGER.—Naval uniform.

JULIA.—*First dress*: Blue pelisse and straw bonnet. *Second dress*: White satin, trimmed with blonde lace.

MARY.—*First dress*: Peasant's cloak—gipsy hat, and cap. *Second dress*: White muslin—no cap.

THE LARBOARD FIN.

ACT I.

SCENE I. — *The Interior of the Dolphin Public House, on the coast of Cornwall. — A fire place, L. F. — a window, C. F. — a door, R. F.*

SIMON SWIPES, CORPORAL, and Soldiers, seated at a table, R., drinking — MARY, with a bonnet, cloak, and lantern, seated beside the fire-place, L. F., discovered. — *Thunder and lightning.*

GLEE.—SOLDIERS.

Let tempests roar, and lightnings flash,—
Let billows rend the sea ;
And warring winds with thunder clash,
Yet what for storms care we ?
Though seamen all such horrors share,
We take our flowing glass ;
And drown all coming thought of care
With a toast to the soldier's lass.

In battle it is oft our doom
'Midst wounds and death to be ;
Yet, in these scenes of strife and gloom,
For danger what care we ?
Fatigue and war each soldier greets,
As freely as his glass ;
For courage steels the heart that beats
For the soldier's faithful lass.

Simon. [*Coming forward, tipsy, singing.*] “ And drink to the soldier's lass ! ” — Eh, Mary ? But what's the use of wasting one's breath and one's liquor upon you ? You haven't a soul for a soger, but are always hankering after the Jack tars. Why don't you keep company with the military ? There's my noble self, for instance——

Cor. [*Coming forward, laughing.*] Ha ! ha ! ha ! — You a soldier !

Sim. D'ye mean to say I am not in the service? I am a soldier at second hand.

Cor. How so?

Sim. Ar'n't I a military gentleman's gentleman? And, for the matter of uniform, my red breeches are as good as your red coat any day.

Mary. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, you tipsy-getting fellow, to be chattering and drinking here, when there's no knowing what has become of the colonel and Miss Julia! Have you obtained any tidings of them, corporal?

Cor. No, Miss Mary. They left Squire Barton's above two hours since. I fear the storm has overtaken them, and they have lost their way. [*Thunder and lightning.*]

Mary. It rages fearfully. My father, too, is from home.

Cor. Ah, he is always on the beach when the wind is at its highest. But listen—I hear footsteps.

Sim. Do you, though? Perhaps it is the colonel, and perhaps he is drunk. If so, he is sure to swear none of us are sober. I'll be off, and "Drink to the soldier's lass." [*Exit, singing, D. F.—Voices heard without.*]

Mary. Ha! they come. Corporal, I thank you for escorting me; all is safe now.

Enter CANN, with fishing-nets, D. F., ushering in COLONEL TRAVERS and JULIA—Mary runs to Julia, expressing delight at seeing her—the Soldiers place chairs for them, and exeunt, D. F.—Colonel Travers sits, R.—Julia and Mary retire to the fire-place, L.

Cann. (c.) Why, as to that, your honour, you are quite welcome to the shelter of my poor house, such as it is.—[*Aside.*] Curse upon the chance that threw them across my path!

Tra. Humble as it is, it defends us from the storm; a palace could do no more. But what does Mary here?

Julia. [*Coming forward with Mary.*] Kind girl! she was alarmed at our protracted absence, and came hither to seek us.

Cann. She would do better to keep at home.

Mary. [*Taking his hand.*] Nay, father, be not angry!

Cann. Bah! do not trouble me; I have my nets to mend.

Julia. Are you going to venture out on such a night as this?

Cann. Oh, yes;—the fish drift along shore in a storm, and take the baits more easily.

Tra. You must be getting rich with your double occupation of innkeeper and fisherman.

Cann. We lead a terrible hard life, and often risk our all for next to nothing.

Tra. Not always so. There are some among you who get a livelihood without scarcely working at all—those wretches who plunder the shipwrecked. I hope, *Cann*, you will lend your assistance to discover the leader of this rapacious gang.

Cann. [*Hastily.*] Look ye, colonel: I am a plain man, and mayhap my bluntness may give offence; but if you expect me to become a spy upon my neighbours, you have mistaken your man.

Tra. [*Rising.*] I will be plain also, and, as a magistrate, tell you, that unless, on the next occasion, you are found to assist the shipwrecked sufferers who may be cast upon this shore, I shall deem you adding and abetting in their spoliation, and deal with you accordingly.

Cann. [*Aside.*] I must not be discovered, but play the hypocrite. [*Aloud.*] Colonel, I meant no harm; though it does hurt an honest man to be taxed with crimes of which he is guiltless. When another wreck happens here, be assured I will lend every aid. [*A gun is heard at a distance.—Aside, exultingly.*] Ha! a distress gun!—'Tis music to my ear!

Julia. Did not I hear a signal of distress?

Cann. [*Anxiously.*] Oh no, my lady; it was only the shed-door blown to by the wind. [*Thunder.*]

Julia. Hark how the storm rages! I fear we must remain here all night.

Cann. [*Aside.*] Confound them! I shall lose my prize.

Tra. Nay, *Julia*, that cannot be. I will go in quest of *Simon*, whom I ordered to meet us here with the chaise. I will soon return.

[*Exit, D. F.—Lightning.*]

Cann. [*Aside, looking out of the window, c. F.*] Ha! 'tis as I had hoped! A vessel is beating about the bay, and cannot round the point. Glorious fortune! [*Turning round.*] Curse upon these intruders! But, hold! I must not betray myself, and that, too, before my daughter.—[*Advancing, c.*] I hope *Mary* behaves well, *Miss Julia*.

Julia. Indeed she does; as an attendant, she is kind, obliging, and faithful; nay, she is quite my friend.

Cann. I am pleased to hear it, madam. [*Thunder.*] Hark!—Excuse me, *Miss Julia*; I must away. [*Aside, going.*] Another moment, and my good fortune might be lost! I will hasten and prepare my arms. [*Exit, R.*]

Julia. [*Looking anxiously round.*] Thank Heaven, we are at last alone? What, for mercy's sake, induced you to leave the fort?

Mary. When the storm came on, I trembled lest what really has happened should come to pass—that you would be obliged to take shelter here. If the colonel had met your lover—whom we may expect every instant—what would you have done?

Julia. Cruel uncle! why give cause for concealment and deceit? Frederick's letter informed me that he would be here to-night, in this very house. [*Smiling.*] But tell me, Mary, did you really venture through the storm on *my* account alone?

Mary. What other object could I have in view?

Julia. Are you quite sure you are not dying to behold the lover Frederick has promised you, in the person of Bob Stay?

Mary. Not absolutely dying, my dear mistress, though I confess I should like to see the fellow well enough.

A Voice. [*Without, at a great distance.*] Yo ho!

Mary. Hark!—Did you not hear a voice?

Julia. No, girl; it must be your silly fancy.

A Voice. [*Without, nearer.*] Hillio ho! yo ho!

Mary. There again!—You find, madam, it is not fancy. I must haste to see who comes.

[*Exit, with the lantern, D. F.*]

Julia. Faithful girl! how can I e'er reward thee! If it should be Frederick at this untoward moment, all our hopes will be blighted. Yet I trust this last attempt to soften my uncle's obduracy will be crowned with success.

Mary. [*Without.*] This way, sir; take care of the wooden step, sir.

Re-enter MARY, D. F., followed by FREDERICK DER-VANION.

Fre. [*Rushing to Julia, and embracing her.*] Dearest Julia!

Mary. [*Aside.*] Well, now, really it is very odd that these sailors can never come near a pretty face without—Why, they are satisfied with nothing less than a downright hug! I wonder where's this much-talked-of Bob Stay.

Fre. And is your cruel uncle still inexorable? One more attempt to gain his consent might perhaps succeed.

Julia. Alas! Frederick, I fear 'tis impossible.

Fre. Impossible!—You forget, love, there is no such

word in a sailor's vocabulary. Besides, I expect promotion daily; and although the colonel is proof against one epaulette, who knows what he may say when I obtain two?

Julia. Your rank is not the only obstacle—would it were! for well I know your courage would soon remove it; but your family——

Fre. [*Despondingly.*] All efforts to obtain information on that subject have unhappily failed. [*Looking round.*] But who have we here—a stranger?

Julia. You surely cannot have forgotten little Mary?

Fre. Ah! is this Mary? Why, you have grown quite to a woman!

Mary. And high time, too, sir; for it is three years since you last saw me.

Julia. But where is the lover you promised her in your last letter?

Fre. What, my faithful Bob Stay? Oh, he's fell foul of half a dozen fishermen; I couldn't get him along till he had persuaded a host of them to join him here in a bowl of grog. [*Cheering without.*] Egad! he cannot be far off.

MUSIC.—*Enter BOB STAY, D. F., with a bottle and glass, followed by six Wreckers, dressed as Fishermen.*

Bob. Come, bear a hand, ye lubbers!—D'ye think you'll go to bed sober to-night, any of ye? Devil a one! The swab that wouldn't get jolly drinking the health of our brave lieutenant here, ought to be put on short allowance for a month. Hillio! Here, landlord, ahoy! hand up grog for twelve!

First Wrecker. Grog for twelve!—Why, there are only six of us.

Bob. Where did you larn to work a reckoning, you land-and-water ampliberous herring-catcher? We must be all two-share men to-night; and sooner than the decks should not be cleared, why, damme! I'll mop 'em dry myself.

Mary. Hist!—Madam, I hear the chaise. [*To Frederick.*] You, sir, had better retire; I will show you to an apartment. [*Looking through the window, c. F.*] Ha! the colonel! See—he is opening the outer door! [*Going, L.*] This way, sir.

Fre. [*Embracing Julia.*] Adieu, my beloved! May we soon meet again! [*Exeunt Mary and Frederick, L.*]

Re-enter COLONEL TRAVERS, hastily, D. F.

Tra. Now, Julia, all is prepared for our departure.—Mary must remain with her father to-night; our chaise will be filled without her. Come!

[Exeunt Colonel Travers and Julia, D. F.]

Bob. *[Looking about.]* Where the devil is this landlord? *[Calling off, L.]* 'Blow, in the galley, ahoy! Grog 'pon deck; and—d'ye hear?—continually send up the liquor till the middle watch!

Re-enter MARY, L., with a bowl of liquor, pipes, &c.

Mary. *[To Bob.]* My father, sir, is busy mending his nets, and has sent me to attend upon his customers.

Bob. My dear eyes! there's a angel of a landlord!—Pipe all hands to mischief! Here goes! *[Kisses her.]*

Mary. Well, I never——But I see you are a true British tar; that's always the way with the sailors.

Bob. Bless your lovely figure-head! I see you are a true English-hearted girl, as don't gammon to be affronted at an honest buss from Jack ashore. Lord love you! you've as clean a run fore and aft as a gentleman's yacht, and are all right under the breast-works. Oh, bless you! *[Kissing her again.]* I can't help it!

Mary. *[Aside, going, L.]* Hearty fellow! I cannot be offended with him, he appears so good-tempered!

[Exit, L.]

Bob. Good bye, darling! Now, then, all hands to the grog tub. *[Lightning flashes across the window.]* 'Tis blazing away, yet. I've been in a few storms afore now, my lads; but I'm blowed if this don't beat 'em all by chalks! *[Sitting down.]* Ah! many's the poor cretur as'll be fitted foreign afore the morning-watch, without so much as a stitch from the sail-maker, or a prayer from the chaplain! Many's the infortunate craft as'll go down like a tin pot! But, howsumever, this arn't the way to be jolly—is it, my hearties? *[Drinking out of the bowl.]* Come, bale out—d'ye hear? *[They drink.]*

Enter a WRECKER, D. F.

First Wrecker. *[Whispering to one of his companions.]* She can't last another half hour—her masts have gone by the board.

Second W. [*Apart.*] Then there's no time to lose. Is old Cann ready?

First W. Yes; he has put the arms and tackle in the shed, yonder.

Re-enter FREDERICK DERVANION, L.

Fre. Well, Bob, I've secured berths for us both.

Bob. [*Coming forward, tipsy.*] Hallo! belay there!—How's this?—Have I shipped too much grog aboard?

First W. [*Apart to the others.*] Come, boys; we lose time—the vessel is going to pieces; she'll be a glorious prize! [*Going.*]

Bob. What, are ye off, messmates? Well, good night; I'll pay the shot, though I'm blowed if you're half drunk enough! But, mind, "victualled on board the day discharged!" [*Exeunt Wreckers, D. F.*]

Fre. If we were afloat, Bob, I should be puzzled to report *all* "present and sober."

Bob. [*Staggering.*] Small helm! stea—steady! 'Pon my Davy, 'tis a hard thing that a sober hand like me can't ship a can of grog, and then another, and then another, without sailing by the head!

Fre. Now, then, Stay, to business; we must understand each other. You and I are allied by a closer tie than that which usually binds officer to seaman. I was once no higher in the service than yourself—was, in fact, your messmate.

Bob. True enough, sir;—time was, as you say, when it was only plain "Fred.," and a slap abaft, [*Slapping Frederick's shoulder.*] instead of "your honour," and an unshipped toppler. [*Taking off his hat.*] But what of that? Rank's none the worse for having been earned by merit; and one officer, such as your honour, is worth all the dandy skippers on the admiralty books.

Fre. Egad, Bob, you are not so drunk as you seem.—But now for my plan. If old Travers persists in refusing to rate me as his son-in-law, I shall endeavour to obtain Julia's consent to a run-away match; in which I count upon your assistance.

Bob. [*Surprised.*] Run away, your honour! Why, you don't mean it! [*Hesitatingly.*] You see, sir, running away is a sort of sarvice we British tars war'nt edicated for.

Fre. How! do you refuse?

Bob. I axes your honour's pardon; them words always staggers a man-o'-war's-man. But I see now how your

honour's working the signals. You ar'n't going to run from an enemy—no, no!—but with a sweetheart; and if so be as the prize is not to be run safely into the port of matrimony without a press of sail, why, crack along, say I! I'll volunteer for the matter of that; for it will never do for a Jack-tar to refuse to help a pretty girl in distress for a husband.

Fre. Thank you, my brave fellow. But I say, Bob, is not she an angel?

Bob. Why, your honour, as to that I can't exactly say, for I never seed one, except that she-sort of a mermaid painted over the Angel Tap at Devil's Point. But, talking of Plymouth, there was Bet Blowhard—she was a reg'lar first-rater. My eyes! what a figure-head! Why, she was as bluff in the bows as a Dutch brig, and as taut in the waist as a wherry. Then she hung out such top-lights! none of your half-and-half dead eyes, as could only leer one way at once! Why, one of Bet's blinkers used to be set on the starboard watch, while t'other kept a bright look-out to larboard. [*Squinting.*] And then, her starn—my dear eyes!

Fre. [*Laughing.*] Was she as accomplished as beautiful?

Bob. 'Complished! — Aye, that she was. Why, she could chew a quid as well as any fo'castle-man aboard.

Fre. And innocent?

Bob. As a babby, your honour; only she got married to two marines and a boatswain in one week, and takes her allotments for all three at the Pay Office, as regularly as the quarters come round.

Fre. Very virtuous, truly! But, to return to my favourite theme: the objections of Colonel Travers to me as a son-in-law are insurmountable. The mystery of my origin is a fatal bar to our happiness; and my only chance is the desperate expedient of carrying off his ward, and trusting to time for his forgiveness. If we succeed, it will make me the happiest of men, and you——

Bob. What, sir?

Fre. Captain of the main-top.

Bob. Captain of the main-top! Oh, I shall be as proud as a reefer in new togs! [*Thunder—a gun heard without.*] But, avast! signals of distress! Hadn't we better——

Fre. Right, Bob;—it will never do for British tars to be overhauling family affairs, when there may be lives to save.

[*Exit, D. F.—Another gun is heard without.*]

Bob. What, another? Cheer up, my boys! I'm off like a rocket. Who can I help first? *[Exit, D. F.]*

MUSIC.—*Re-enter CANN, L. S. E., armed, in a mask, with a coil of rope thrown over his shoulder.*

Cann. *[Examining his pistols.]* Come, my trusty weapons; we must frighten these half-drowned wretches out of a portion of their treasure. This mask will conceal my features. *[Goes to the window, C. F., and looks out.]*

Re-enter MARY, unobserved, L.

See! she has not a rag or a splinter left—a sheer hulk!—Another lurch, and——Ha! she founders! Now's the time for action! Courage and good fortune befriend me!

[Exit, D. F.]

Mary. *[Distractedly.]* What dreadful words were those! My horrible suspicions will soon be confirmed. Am I the daughter of a—a——Oh, mercy! I cannot speak the word. This night will prove whether my parent be the fearful man I deem him or not. Shall I discover myself to be the daughter of a—wrecker? Or shall I remain in doubt?—Oh! no, no!—Suspense is madness! Oh, my father! I will follow him, and save a parent from degradation and death! *[Exit, hurriedly, D. F.]*

SCENE II.—*A Sea-Side Landscape, and extensive View of the Ocean.—Nearly dark.*

Enter CANN, as before, R., and FIRST WRECKER, hastily, L., meeting.

First W. A rich booty awaits us; the ship has this moment struck.

Cann. Are the lads all armed?

First W. Aye, to the teeth.

Cann. We may be resisted. Remain here, and give notice, should any one approach. For your life, be vigilant!

[Exit, replacing his mask, L.]

Enter BOB STAY, running, R.

Bob. My eyes! what a crowd of sail the lieutenant does crack on! Why, he was out of sight in summat less than no time.

First W. [*Aside, seeing Bob.*] Ha! that devil of a sailor, popping before one like the Flying Dutchman in a storm! Cann must be warned; I will hasten, and——

[*Going, L.*

Bob. [*Pulling him back.*] No, no! if you do, I'm blown! What! would you go into action afore a man-o'-war's man? Where did you larn manners? Arter your betters, if you please!

[*Exeunt, L.*

Enter MARY, R. — *she rushes across with hurried steps, and exits, L.*

SCENE III.—*The Sea Shore—the hull of a vessel struck upon a rock—crash, thunder, and lightning.*

HURRIED MUSIC.—*Enter Wreckers, with lighted torches, R.—they cross, and jump confusedly from rock to rock.*

A STRANGER, *struggling in the sea, is tossed on shore, grasping a packet, C.*

Enter CANN, masked, R.

Cann. [*Seeing the Stranger with the packet.*] Ha! a prize!

[*The Stranger rises feebly, and draws his sword—Cann attacks him, and, after a severe struggle, the Stranger loses his weapon, and Cann is about to snatch the packet from him.*

Enter MARY, unperceived, R. S. E., and conceals herself behind a rock, R.

Enter FREDERICK, hastily, R.

Fre. [*Attacking Cann.*] Cowardly wretch! stay thy purpose!

[*Cann discharges a pistol, and the Stranger falls.*

COMBAT *between CANN and FREDERICK.*

[*Frederick is disarmed—he retreats, picks up the Stranger's sword, and returns again to the combat.*

Enter BOB STAY, hurriedly, R.

Bob. Avast, your honour! let me have a smash at him! [*Engaging Cann.*] I'll soon charter his hull for Davy Jones's locker!

[*He cuts Cann severely across the LEFT ARM.*

Cann. [*Retreating.*] I'll be revenged for this!

[*Exit, hastily, L.*

Bob. [*Looking about.*] Any more? — 'Cause, damme! that's the third lubber I've peppered!

Stranger. [*Faintly to Frederick, who leans over him.*] Alas! kind sir, it is too late. Take this packet; keep it in remembrance of one, whose life you would have saved, had Heaven permitted! [*Gives the packet to Frederick, who hands it to Bob.*] My sword is already yours, and nobly have you won it!

Fre. I swear to revenge your death!

Stranger. All is now over—and——

[*Slow music—he dies.*]


Mary. [*Coming forward, wringing her hands.*] Dead! dead!—Murdered by my father!

Enter Villagers and Soldiers, hurriedly, R.

Villagers, &c. Where are they? where are they?

Bob. Silence, ye lubbers! — D'ye see what's here? — Death! [*Tableau, and the curtain falls to slow music.*]

END OF ACT I.

 *A period of twelve months is supposed to have elapsed between the first and second act.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. — *An Apartment in the Fort—chairs and a table, with writing materials, near C. F.*

JULIA and MARY discovered seated at the table.

Julia. What makes you so melancholy to-day, Mary?

Mary. Oh, madam! 'tis the anniversary of the death of my brother; and the thought of the disgrace he brought upon us makes me sad.

Julia. Nay, but that happened when you were too young to feel his loss;—besides, he is generally thought to have been guiltless of the crime imputed to him, and for which he was executed.

Mary. Indeed, madam, he was; and the principal evidence that caused his conviction was Colonel Travers.

Julia. You say truly, indeed, child.

Mary. And there, madam, lies the cause of all my sorrow. My father has never forgiven your uncle; and the

curses I have overheard him denounce against my benefactor have often made me tremble.

Julia. Your father possesses a violent temper, and, during its fury, utters more than he has always a meaning for. But, come, let us talk on a less dreary theme—of my Frederick and your Robert. I cannot account for their sudden disappearance after that dreadful night of storm and shipwreck.

Mary. [*Rising, with great energy.*] Oh! do not name that fearful night; the recollection of it will drive me to despair! [*Covers her face in an agony of grief.*]

Julia. It seems, my poor girl, to have left a terrible impression on your memory. But you must rouse yourself from such reflections, particularly at a time when I have so much cause to rejoice.

Mary. True, my dear, kind mistress! Why should I pain you with such frequent allusions to my troubles, when I ought to gladden you with smiles? Come—[*Attempting to compose herself.*] come; let us be merry.

Julia. Yes; the silly prejudices of my uncle are at length overcome, and Frederick will soon be mine; a consummation for which I am mainly indebted to your persevering zeal.

Mary. [*Smiling.*] Rather bestow your thanks on the charming little paragraph that appeared in the Gazette, announcing the promotion of your gallant lover.

Julia. Good girl! I thought your tears would soon dry.

Mary. 'Twas only an April shower. Should we not communicate our good news to the captain?

Julia. True; but in what way? The colonel will not write, and I may not.

Mary. Shall I write to him, madam? And, to relieve the captain from the imputation of being in correspondence with a waiting-maid, suppose I sign a feigned name.

Julia. Yes; and suppose Mr. Robert Stay should chance to see the handwriting? Jealousy is, you know—

Mary. Nay, madam, you are too hard. [*Sitting at the table to write.*] How shall I begin?

Julia. Oh, it will never do for you to plead ignorance to the diction of love-letters, after the voluminous correspondence that has taken place between you and Robert.

Mary. [*Writing.*] “The flinty-hear-t-ed old co-lo-nel has [*Spelling.*] r-e-l-e-n-t-e-d—so please to c-o-m-e—come, and be mar-ri-ed im-mc-di-ate-ly.” With three dashes under immediately.

Julia. I am very much obliged to you, Mary ; but Frederick will think us mad.

Mary. And I am not quite sure but he will think right ; for the prospect of a wedding is apt to turn us poor forlorn damsels half crazy.

Julia. Not so forlorn either, Mary, if Bob Stay proves true blue.

Mary. Now, then, for the seal, and send it to the post-office.
[Rings the bell.]

Enter SIMON SWIPES, tipsy, L.

Julia. Take this letter to the post-office, Simon. Why, you seem quite tipsy.

Sim. Y—[*Hiccups.*]*—es, my lady, I know I am ; but please don't tell master ; for, if you please, miss, I'm in—*[*Hiccups.*] *in love.*

Julia. Indeed, I think you are—with the ale-cask.

Sim. Yes, miss, I do love ale when it be strong ; but pretty Mary there makes me drunk every day.

Julia. Mary, how's this ?

Sim. Now, it's of no use denying it, Mary. 'Tis she drives me to it, your ladyship—she does, indeed. She won't love me, and——

Julia. Psha ! you silly fellow ! Take the letter, and make haste.

Mary. [*Laughing.*] Poor fellow ! Now, madam, let us hasten to buy up all the white ribbons in the village !

[*Exeunt, Mary and Julia, R., Simon, L.*]

SCENE II.—*The Interior of the Dolphin Public House, as before—a table, C.*

Bob Stay. [*Without.*] Hillo ! landlord, ahoy !

Enter BOB STAY, D. F.

What ! are ye all dead, or only drunk ? Blow me, if this arn't the most uninhabited coast I ever landed on ! When I cruized here, in consort with my commander, twelve months ago, we sailed a matter of a dozen knots afore we fell foul of a soul, and, arter all, overhauled a man as turned out to be a woman ! But such a woman ! my dear eyes ! She has stuck as close to my heart ever since, as barnacles to an old keel, while I have been as drop-locked as a sea-gull. [*Sitting.*] I once fell foul of a valentine that was filled with a stowage of palaver about one Admi-

ral Cupid, as commands in these parts, [*Placing his hand on his breast.*] and, blow me! but the young pirate has got me completely under hatches. If I don't get Mary within the range of my blinkers pretty sharpish, I'll kick up a most thunderation row! [*Rising.*] So, here goes! [*Calling loudly.*] Yo ho! hillio! aboard the Dolphin, ahoy! [*A pause—footsteps heard approaching, L.*] Ha! she comes—I hear a step! Lord, what a buss I'll salute her with!—It shall go off like a thirty-pounder!

[*Crosses hastily to L., with open arms.*]

Enter CANN, L., meeting Bob Stay, who embraces him.

Cann. Stand off!

Bob. Damn my blinkers! here's a blunder!

Cann. What! d'ye take me for—a woman?

Bob. [*Slyly.*] Not exactly. But, howsumever, old rough and tough, you won't take no offence, I hope; so tip us your flipper. [*They shake hands.*] And now for a can of grog. [*Music.—Cann places glasses, &c., on the table.*] Why, you see, commodore, a twelvemonths' voyage without so much as the sight of a petticoat, makes Jack summat rumfusticle; and, to tell you the truth, I was expecting to see your darter.

Cann. Ah, she is at the fort.

Bob. The very port I'm bound for.

Cann. So, so! What business can you have at the fort?

Bob. To deliver despatches from my commander.

Cann. Indeed!—And, pray, who may your commander be?

Bob. Why, as you don't seem a bit curious, old commodore, I'll tell you: Captain Dervanion.

Cann. [*Aside, in alarm.*] Captain Dervanion! The only evidence by which I might be convicted of the murder of the stranger!

Bob. Why, you stare, my hearty, to hear him called captain. Didn't you know he had shipped another swab? Yes, we have both been promoted—both captains.

Cann. You a captain?

Bob. To be sure—captain of the main-top.

Cann. [*Aside.*] I must use caution with this fellow.—
[*Aloud.*] Sit down, friend—sit down. [*They sit, Bob R. of the table, and Cann L.*] You have been in these parts before?

Bob. Of course, I have.

Cann. How long since ?

Bob. How long ? Why, as nigh hand a twelvemonth ago as may be ; aye, and I sha'n't forget it in a hurry, old chap. But, come, douse out the tipples, and I'll spin the whole yarn from clew to earring. [*Cann fills the glasses, and they drink.*] Well, you see, about a year ago—yes, it was a year ago, the captain and I cast anchor in this very cabin ; when, all on a sudden, we heard signals of distress. Off scuds the lieutenant—as was then, mind ye, and I arter him. Well, you see, he being of a lighter build than myself, forged a-head, and we parted company. Hows'ever, I soon turned off upon the beach, and spies a whole crew of hands, some with torches, others with ropes. Well, at this moment, it blowed like blue murder, spank in shore—a reg'lar sneezer. “Lights, ahoy !” says I, “where's the wreck ?” “What's that to you ?” says they. Just then I heard a piercing shriek ; so I bowls up to a lazy lubber as was looking on—“Here,” says I, “lend us a hand to help this poor cretur from swamping.” “Help be damned !” says he. “What !” says I, “see a fellow-cretur well nigh drowned without heaving him so much as the end of a tow-rope ? Take that !” says I ; so I stove in his piratical nob with the soft side of my cutlass.

[*Hesitates.*]

Cann. [*Aside.*] Ha ! 'twas he, then, who cut Jem's head open !

Bob. Let's see—am I casting up this log Flemish ?—Come, messmate, freshen hawse, [*Pouring out liquor.*] ; and though I have made a hitch in my yarn, I'll soon pay out again. Meantime, I'll give you a toast. May the noose of the gallows, or the jaws of a shark, never be empty while there's a lubberly wrecker to hang or drown ! Now, then, top off ! [*Bob drinks, and Cann throws the liquor over his shoulder.*] Let's see—where did I drop the twist ? Oh ! I'd just opened a hawse-hole in a lubber's top-hamper. Well, then, you see, arter that, I tacked about in chase of the lieutenant ;—I was 'bliged to work a dead reckoning, for 'twas as dark, d'ye see, as the hold of a slaver. Howsumever, a flash of lightning soon showed him to me, peppering away at another of the ruffianly crew ; but that didn't last long, for I fell foul of the swab, and—

Cann. Ha ! what followed ?

Bob. Why, just to know him agin, d'ye see, I scored my mark pretty deep into his LARBOARD FIN !

[*Chord of Music.—They rise.*]

Cann. [*Aside, hastily pulling his dress, and hiding his left arm.*] Confusion! all will be discovered!

Bob. When I looked round, there was my officer bending over the body of a dying man. Poor cretur! how he did lift his eyes up aloft, praying for the captain! aye, and even for the villain who had cut life's cable for him!

[*Brushes his sleeve across his eyes.*]

Cann. Well, is that all?

Bob. Why, yes; only that the poor fellow gave my commander his sword, just to keep him in mind like of a good action; aye, and the weapon has never quitted his side since.

Cann. [*Aside, as if a thought had suddenly struck him.*] Ha! the sword in his possession! [*To Bob.*] You say he still wears it.

Bob. Aye; and I've heard him say he would not part with it not on no account whatsoever; nor with the case of jewels that the shipwrecked man handed over to him besides.

Cann. [*Aside.*] The packet, too! All will be well yet. [*Aloud.*] Do you expect Captain Dervanion here?

Bob. Cartinly I do; these despatches announce his arrival. We are to rendezvous at the fort within an hour.

Enter SIMON SWIPES, drunk, with a letter, D. F.

Sim. [*Staggering.*] Is this—the post-office?

Bob. Who the devil are you?

Sim. I'm a gentleman's gentleman. Are you the post-office, I say?

Bob. [*Mimicing.*] Am I the post-office? No, you swab! But what have you got there? [*Snatching the letter from him, and looking at the direction.*] Now, arn't you a pretty son of a gun, to be posting despatches off to head-quarters, when the commander is cruizing a knot or so astarn! I'll give the letter to the captain.

Sim. There, now, I was sure I was right: I said you were the post-office.

Bob. [*Taking a glass of liquor from the table.*] Come, though you're half-seas over already, you won't mind shipping a mouthful of grog. Here, drink, and give us a toast.

Sim. Well, here's to my sweetheart, Mary Cann.

Bob. [*Seizing him.*] Hallo, there! 'blay, you lying lop-lolly-boy! What do ye mean? Why, I'll blow you from here to Halifax in the flash of a touch-hole!

Cann. The rascal is drunk ; you mustn't heed him.

Bob. Drunk as he is, I suppose he can convoy me to the fort.

Sim. I can't promise to do that, but I don't mind showing you the way.

Bob. Well, heave a-head, then. [*To Cann.*] I say, if the captain should bring-to in these parts, report me gone to the fort, will you ?

Cann. Aye, aye—I will.

[*Music.—Exeunt Simon and Bob, D. F.*]

Cann. [*Laughing.*] Ha ! ha ! ha !—So, this brave captain thinks he is going to wed old Travers' niece ! He is mistaken : his bride shall be the gallows ! The scabbard of the stranger's sword has been preserved by the constable of this village, and is now in his keeping. Frederick—(how familiar am I with that name !) has the only sword to match it. The jewel-case, too ! These, with my evidence, attested upon oath—aye, upon oath—shall suffice ! Now, Colonel Travers, shall the cup of my revenge be filled to the brim ! Did you show mercy when *my* poor innocent boy was hanged, and that, too, for a crime he only saw committed ? No ! the tears of a father—the cries of a mother, availed not ! The time is now come to make known the secret of our deception. Yes, haughty colonel ! my sorrow shall be thy sorrow—that of a childless, blighted heart ! I knew 'twas he ! that well-remembered face was made too plainly visible by the vivid lightning's flash to be mistaken ! I rejoice that he fell not by my hand on that dreadful night, for now will my revenge be complete !

[*Exit, D. F.*]

SCENE III.—*A Garden in the Fort.*

MARY *discovered making wedding-favours.*

Mary. 'Tis now a year since that terrible night, yet the recollection of it seems to grow more vivid every day.—Would that I had never been possessed of the fatal secret ! I dare not think of the crime I saw committed by my own father ! He who gave me life has placed his in my power ; but it is safe ;—yes, he *is* my father, and his child shall never betray him !

Enter JULIA, R.

Julia. What, in tears again, Mary ?

Mary. They are tears of joy, madam : your approaching

marriage chases all care from my breast. The captain, I suppose, will be here soon.

Julia. I hope so. I wonder if he is much altered.

Mary. Ah! he may have had his handsome face disfigured by a scar.

Julia. By the bye, Mary, I trust your lover has not altered either in sentiment or person.

Mary. No, my lady, I believe he has continued true to his Mary; only the rogue has learned to chew tobacco.

Julia. I suppose you will forgive him. But I must hasten to complete my toilette in time to receive my dear Frederick.

[*Exit, R. S. E.*]

[*Mary sits c., and continues busily at work.*]

Enter FREDERICK DERVANION, L. U. E.

Fre. Here I am at last! [*Aside, seeing Mary.*] Ha! a lady here! Egad! I should not wonder but she is the merry letter-writer. I will pay my respects. [*Turning to Mary.*] I believe, madam, I have the honour of addressing a lady, to whom I am indebted for the happiest moment of my life. If, madam, you could form the smallest estimate of the pleasure your communication afforded me, you would—that is to say—[*Aside.*] I always founder with the breakers of a long speech a-head!

Mary. [*Laughing.*] Ah, captain! you are on the wrong tack—you have lost your reckoning—you are out of your latitude—you are——

Fre. Be-calmed in a fog! Why, Mary, you baggage! I've been speechifying to you all this time!

Mary. To be sure you have, captain; — but it's a pity you had not saved your oration for my mistress, for here she comes.

Re-enter JULIA, R.

Fre. [*Embracing her.*] My beloved Julia!

Julia. After so long an absence, this meeting is delightful. But why leave us so soon after our rencontre at the inn?

Fre. The next morning, I unexpectedly received an order to join my ship.

Enter COLONEL TRAVERS, R.

Colonel, I am delighted to see you!

Tra. I suppose, captain, you believed me to be a confounded hard-hearted old fellow; but——

Fre. Gratitude for my present happiness absorbs every other feeling. Believe, my dear sir, that——

Tra. Yes, yes, I understand; but we will defer your speech till after dinner;—so, to save time, suppose we make instant preparation for the wedding, which I intend shall take place to-morrow.

Enter BOB STAY, L. U. E.

Mary. So, Bob, you are here again, at last.

Bob. Here! why, I have been here, there, and everywhere, looking arter you and the captain.

Fre. And what can I do for you?

Bob. [*Touching his hat.*] Fiddler aboard, your honour?

Fre. [*Pointing to Colonel Travers.*] That gentleman commands here.

Bob. [*Bowing to Travers.*] Fiddler aboard, your honour?

Tra. What, in wonder's name, does he mean?

Fre. Why, colonel, in the ideas of a sailor, a fiddler and a wedding are ever inseparables; so, I suppose, honest Bob wishes to introduce one.

Tra. What should we do with a fiddler?

Bob. I axes your honour's worship's pardon; but soon as ever I heard we were to have a splicing match, I made bold to cruize round the whole fleet, and press every able-bodied dancer—man, woman, or child, I could come along side of;—and there they are, close under the lee-quarter of the fort, waiting for orders. Shall I pipe all hands, your worship?

Tra. With all my heart.

Bob. [*Calling off, L.*] All hands 'pon deck, ahoy!—Come, tumble up, old timber-toe!

MUSIC.—*Enter a Fiddler, with a wooden leg, L. U. E.*—

Village Lads and Lasses, L. S. E.—*Mary distributes wedding favours among them.*

Bob. Aye, that's right, my lasses—shove up the white at the main!

A PAS SEUL.

Mary. There, Bob, how do you like it?

Bob. Like!—Like what?

Mary. Why, the dancing.

Bob. Dancing!—Now, you don't mean to call that dancing?—What! spinning round like a lop-sided lugger in a whirlpool! That dancing! Clear the decks, and I'll show you how to shake a toe summat or so ship-shape.

A HORNPIPE.—BOB STAY.

A MORRIS DANCE.—VILLAGERS.

Fre. [*Giving a case of jewels.*] And now, dearest Julia, I will make my wedding present.

Julia. [*Opening the case.*] Diamonds, indeed! Costly as they must be, I esteem them doubly valuable, coming as they do from my dear Frederick.

Enter CANN, L., with the TOWN CLERK, bearing a sword scabbard, and followed by Constables.

Cann. (L.) [*Pointing to Frederick.*] See! he holds the very packet!

Clerk. [*Crossing to Frederick, R. c.*] Sorry to interrupt pleasure, but it is my duty to demand your sword.

Fre. [*Surprised.*] Is the fellow mad?

Clerk. Again I demand your sword.

Fre. Remember, sir, I hold his majesty's commission; and it is only my respect for those present that prevents me from chastising your insolence on the spot.

Clerk. [*To a Constable.*] Officer, do your duty.

Constable. [*Laying his hand on Frederick's shoulder, and showing a warrant.*] Frederick Dervanion, I arrest you in the king's name!

Omnes. Arrest!

Bob. [*Pushing the constables aside.*] Paws off there, you lubbers! — Touch him again, and, blow me, but I'll pitch into ye like lightning into a top-sail!

Fre. Silence, Bob. [*To the Town Clerk.*] By whose authority is this outrage committed?

Clerk. By the authority of that warrant, which charges you on suspicion of murdering a person, (name unknown) while pretending to save him from shipwreck.

Bob. [*To Frederick.*] Only say the word, your honour, and I'll unship his jawing-tacks in the snapping of a bunt-line!

Clerk. Constables, to your duty!

[*The Constables arrest Frederick—Julia sinks into the arms of Colonel Travers—the Town Clerk draws the sword, crosses to L., and examines it with the scabbard.*]

Clerk. The sword is, indeed, the one belonging to this scabbard.

Bob. [*Drawing his cutlass.*] Come, I say, captain, I

shall mutiny ! You don't mean to stand overhauling by these land-sharks, do ye ? You board two of them, and I'll shatter the hulls of t'other six.

[*Tableau—the curtain falls quickly.*]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

[*Music before the curtain rises.*]

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Fort.*

JULIA *discovered seated on a couch, c., weeping*—BOB STAY *standing near her, R.*

Bob. Lord bless your ladyship's honour ! we are quite on a different tack now : the captain has demanded a court-martial. As for them 'ere lubbers as wanted to try him, they knew no more consarnin' law, than a marine knows about navigation. Why, an old barnacle-rigged commodore (magistrate I think they call him, in shore-going lingo) axes me what I am. "Captain o' the main-top," says I. "And what's that?" says he. Now, ma'am, war'nt he a pretty know-nothing sort of a swab to ax sich a lubberly question ?

Julia. But did not your evidence make any impression ?

Bob. 'Pression !—Not a bit ; no more nor a 'bacca-stopper on an old quid ;—might as well have axed mercy at the grating of a boatswain's mate. Why, though I took my affidavit that I met the black-muzzled pirate that really did the murder, and how that I put my mark upon his larboard arm, yet they wouldn't believe me.

Julia. If, then, you could discover the person so wounded, he must be the guilty one.

Bob. That's just what they said ; but I can't go overhauling all the fins in the parish.

Julia. Alas ! I fear there is little hope.

Bob. No hope, ma'am !—That's a false reckoning : there's always hope for a sailor. Did your ladyship never hear of—

"The sweet little cherub that sits smiling aloft,
To keep watch for the life of poor Jack ?"

Aye, and a precious bright look-out he keeps, too ! Besides, we are going to have a court-martial, and the cap-

tain will be tried by men that know their duty—regular able-bodied seamen, who can name every rope, rag, and splinter, low and aloft. They're the lawyers for my money!

Julia. Would I could behold my dear Frederick ere the trial takes place!

Bob. Why, that you can do easy enough, if you would not mind seeing the captain convoyed to the Eagle's Tower, yard-arm and yard-arm with a file of boiled lobsters—confound 'em!

Julia. To the Eagle's Tower! Ha! then my wish can be accomplished. There is a secret passage under the tower, which, in my childish rambles, I once explored; but the cave over which it passes is used by smugglers, and there would be danger in exploring it.

Bob. Danger, my lady!—Not none at all, if you would be pleased to commission me for the sarvice;—and if so be we should fall foul of the smugglers, you will find one honest British tar a match for a dozen of 'em.

Julia. I gladly accept your offer. But we shall have many difficulties to encounter; for I now remember that the old stair-case has partly fallen in.

Bob. Oh, that's a trifle! Give me a coil of rope, and a hank of spun-yarn, and I'll make as taut a pair of steps—as handsome a staircase, as you'd meet with in a day's cruise.

Julia. True; a rope-ladder might overcome the difficulty. Meet me, then, within an hour at the mouth of the cave; and be sure you are well-armed.

Bob. Aye, aye, ma'am, in full fig. I'll show like a gun-brig going into action.

Julia. [Crossing to R.] Remember—in an hour!

Bob. [Going, L.] Aye, ma'am, I'll be with you;—I know better manners than to keep a lady waiting.

[*Music.*—*Exeunt, Julia, R. S. E., Bob, L.*]

SCENE II.—*A Library in the Fort—an open window, c. f., reaching to the floor—a table, &c.*

Enter COLONEL TRAVERS, L., followed by CANN.

Tra. Richard Cann, you are the sole witness against the unfortunate prisoner;—you have sworn you saw him commit the crime of which he is accused; while the sword and jewels found in his possession give strong colour to your evidence. His life is in your power, and I have sent for you, to inquire upon what terms you will spare it.

Cann. None that you can offer ! He shall go to trial !

Tra. Then, may Heaven send him a good deliverance.

Cann. What ! good deliverance to a murderer ! [*Sarcastically.*] There was no such wish uttered twenty years ago !

Tra. At one word, will you accept the annuity I have offered you, or will you not ?

Cann. [*Firmly.*] At one word, I will not ! I would not exchange my long-sought revenge for millions !

Tra. Implacable villain !

Cann. Colonel Travers, yesterday was the anniversary of the death of a boy who was hanged—murdered, by the false and malignant evidence of one single witness. The youth had a father—aye, and a mother, who sought their child's accuser with tears and supplications that would have agonized a human heart : that cold-blooded, heartless witness refused to withhold his suspicions ; he refused, I say——

Tra. Leave me, wretch !

Cann. I have not done yet. From that fatal time did the father become a desperate, broken man ; and from that moment—the moment when he saw his only boy, his own flesh and blood, hanging on a gibbet, like a *guilty* malefactor—from that moment, I say, did he meditate a deep, a dire revenge ! It has taken years to complete it ; and shall he now sell his vengeance ? Never ! never !

Tra. Again, I say, begone !

Cann. Not till you have heard all.

Tra. Depart on the instant, ere my servants force thee hence !

Cann. [*Carelessly.*] They will not lay a finger on me !

Tra. Do you mock me, viper ?

Cann. Mark me ! One word from my lips, and you would give worlds to prevent my departure.

Tra. Ha !

Cann. You had a son !

Tra. [*With emotion.*] If you know aught of him, I implore you, by all that is sacred, to reveal it.

Cann. [*Laughing exultingly.*] Ha ! ha ! ha ! — Times are changed. What ! does the high-born Colonel Travers implore the wretched Cann ? But you shall be obeyed. I will reveal. Shortly after you had procured the condemnation of my son by false evidence, my wife was hired to take charge of your boy.

Tra. Merciful powers ! I see it all !

Cann. The child was lost.

Tra. Drowned!

Cann. So you believed. Know, then, that he was not drowned.

Tra. Heaven be praised!—He still, perhaps, lives.

Cann. But a fate worse than death awaited him. I, unknown to my wife, sent him to a distant part of the coast, to associate with smugglers and ruffians of the worst class, whose depravity know no bounds.

Tra. Alas! poor boy!

Cann. Fate again strove against my anxious hopes. The youth deserted the crew, and entered the navy, where his good conduct and bravery procured for him such rapid promotion, that he is now——

Tra. What?—I almost dread to hear!

Cann. Post-Captain!

Tra. [*With great energy.*] Tell me truly, as you hope for mercy hereafter, where is my long-lost boy?

[*At this moment, Frederick Dervanion passes before the window, guarded by Soldiers.*]

Cann. [*Pointing exultingly.*] There!!!

[*Music.—Colonel Travers falls insensible—Cann continues to point at Frederick, and the scene closes.*]

SCENE III. — *The Exterior of the Eagle's Tower—the sea-shore, a cave, rocks, &c.*

Enter MARY, with her hair in disorder, L.

Mary. Great powers! preserve my senses for this last desperate struggle! What am I to do? Shall I become the unnatural denouncer of my parent, or calmly behold the innocent lover of my only benefactress pay the price of his accuser's crime? May Heaven direct me in this terrible, maddening alternative!

Enter CANN, hastily, R.

Cann. How now, daughter?—Why loiter here?—Why this distraction?

Mary. I am not distracted, but calm—so calm, that I am ready to sacrifice a life without a tear—without a sigh.

Cann. [*Taking her hand affectionately.*] Come, daughter——

Mary. Call me not daughter—remind me not of the ties that bind us; for I am about to commit a deed that shall sever them for ever!

Cann. Nay, why trouble yourself in a matter which concerns you not?

Mary. Concern me not! Is the happiness of my benefactress no concern of mine?—The life of her affianced husband?

Cann. None, compared with the loss of a brother, [*Ironically.*] murdered by the malignity of the uncle of your “benefactress!”

Mary. Urge not the ties of blood upon me—they are dead within my breast! For my brother, I never saw him, and can have no sympathy with his fate.

Cann. Then art thou a wretch, without feeling—devoid of shame!

Mary. I am—I know I am! That I am bereft of feeling shall be proclaimed to the world this very night.—[*Pausing.*] Unless—[*Hesitating, and pointing to the tower.*] Unless you assist in the escape of yon prisoner.

Cann. Escape!—Assist in the escape of one whose crime I have denounced!—Never!

Mary. You will not? [*Kneeling.*] Oh, father! before I threaten, let me implore!

Cann. Threaten!

Mary. By every sacred tie of blood—by her, whose spirit may be now hovering around us, and, above all, by those hopes which future repentance might give you of joining my sainted mother in another world, I implore—I conjure you, to save Dervanion!

Cann. Look you, girl: for twenty years has this storm been gathering; for twenty years the only bond that hath linked me to earth has been revenge—deep, adequate revenge, for the cold-blooded sacrifice of my son! The storm is about to burst; and shall the cup of vengeance I have been so long and eagerly filling, be dashed from my lips now?—Now, that I am draining its sweetness to the very dregs?

Mary. [*Vehemently.*] It shall! You heed not my entreaties; now tremble at my threats!—threats so potent, that you shall feel the curses you have heaped on the innocent fall on thine own head to crush thee!

Cann. Ha! unfilial wretch! wouldst curse thy father?

Mary. Nay, more: I would—hang him!!

Cann. Art mad, girl?

Mary. Oh! would—would that I were mad! that I had died ere my fatal curiosity proved me to be the daughter of a wrecker—a murderer!

Cann. [*Aside.*] Ha! she knows all, and I am lost!

Mary. Know, then, that the crime of which you have accused the guiltless Dervanion I saw committed by thee—my father!

Cann. All, then, is over! What can I do to save myself?

Mary. [*Pointing to the tower.*] Save him!

Cann. Impossible!—How?

Mary. With ease. You have often boasted that you knew a secret pass under the tower, through which any prisoner who might happen to be confined there could escape. Julia has contrived to plan a meeting with Frederick at the foot of the broken stair: make use of the secret passage, and join them. Do you consent?

Cann. I do—I do! but it will be a hard task; for a trap that leads from the cave must be forced, which, from its long disuse, will require great strength; but I will—I will accomplish it!

Mary. You must escape also.

Cann. Escape!—I?

Mary. Oh, father! when you have done this act of justice to Dervanion, you will have much to fly from. I, your daughter, will then become your accuser.

Cann. How?

Mary. But not till you will be far beyond the reach of those laws you have broken. Haste to some distant shore; my savings in Miss Julia's service shall enable you to fly; and although you may not expiate your crimes, you will at least atone for them by repentance. When assured of your safety, I must clear Frederick's character by accusing you, who will be too far hence to suffer by the accusation. Then, dear father, I will join you to find a better, perhaps a happier parent. Come, father; you will—you will do all this! [*Mary places her arm on Cann's shoulder—a pause—Cann is much agitated.*] Oh, joy! joy! I see upon thy cheek the harbinger of true repentance—a tear! Come, come; let your first step towards it be the escape of Dervanion. Come, come!

[*Music.—They embrace, and exeunt, Mary leading Cann off slowly, L.*]

SCENE IV.—*The Interior of the Eagle's Tower—broken projecting steps, c. f.*

MUSIC.—*Enter BOB STAY, with ropes, followed by JULIA, R. U. E.*

Bob. [*Throwing down the ropes.*] Here we are, your ladyship, safe landed.

Julia. [*Pointing to the steps.*] Yonder is the only approach to the apartment in which Frederick is confined.

Bob. A queer sort of a Jacob's-ladder, sure enough ; but, howsumever, we must rig up our gear ; so, all hands ! [*Pulling the ropes about, and selecting one, which he offers to Julia.*] Now, ma'am, just you lay hold of this rope ; needn't be afeard of it—the tar is uncommon clean. Well, now then, go over a-midships, and catch the end of the coil, while I heave it athwart the steps aloft. Now, then, handsomely ! [*Music.—Bob throws the rope over the steps, but Julia fails to catch it.*] What ! missed your stays ? Oh, confound it ! it's always the way : women and soldiers are not never no use whatsumever ! [*Music. Bob throws the rope over the last step, and climbs up by its assistance, taking with him a rope-tadder, which he makes fast.*] Hands below, ahoy !—D'ye hear, ma'am ?—Splice the shrouds to the main-deck. [*Julia takes the ropes.*] Well, if you can't make a bow-line knot, twist up a half-hitch. That's right ! Why, a week in the fo'castle would turn you out a regular ship-shape fore-top man ! I shan't be long. I'll just hand the captain my pistols, in case of a squally voyage, and tell him you are close alongside. [*Music.—He pulls out his pistols, and climbs up the steps.*]

Julia. [*Looking anxiously after him.*] Ha ! he is at the top, safe and unquestioned ! Even amidst so much misery and danger, with what rapture do I contemplate beholding my adored Frederick ! [*A knocking heard below the trap, L. c.*] Ha ! what noise was that ? [*A pause—the knocking is repeated.*] Can it be smugglers ? [*The trap opens, L. c.*] Great powers ! it moves ! Let me fly whilst I have yet the power ! [*Exit, hastily, R. S. E.*]

[*A hand appears forcing up the trap.*]

Re-enter BOB STAY from the tower, and descends.

Bob. Now, ma'am, it's all right ; he'll be here afore you can cry Jack Rob—Why, hollo ! how's this ?—Not here ?—What ! deserted her colours ?—Here's a pretty sort of a shipmate ! My eyes ! if we had her at the gangway, she would deserve a round dozen ! [*Seeing the trap move.*] Belay ! what the deuce is here ? A prisoner, battened and hatchwayed down ? Mayhap he—'Spose it should be a smuggler ? I'll just clear for action. [*Music.*]

He draws his cutlass—the trap is nearly up, but in the last effort to get it quite open, the whole of an arm appears, and the dress falling over the elbow, discovers a large scar.] Eh! no!—I arn't drunk, am I?—No, I'm as sober as the chaplain on Sundays. Is it? [*Stooping, and examining the arm closer.*] It is! it's plain as the king's broad R on a ring-bolt! [*Music.*] Huzza! the LARBOARD FIN! [*Seizing the arm, and dragging out Cann.*] Come out of your rat-hole, you varmint! I'll riddle your hull for ye, I will! you piratical, false-swearing, smuggling son of a shore-going shark!—Surrender!

Cann. [*Struggling.*] Unhand me, villain!

Bob. That be blowed!—No, no, my jolly!—Now I have taken you in tow, I'll stick to your cursed ugly carcass as close as a tight-fitting tog!

[*Music.—They struggle violently, and Cann releases himself.*]

Cann. [*Drawing his sword.*] Let me pass on, or, by Heaven, this moment is thy last!

Bob. What, is it you—the landlord of the Dolphin?—Why, shiver me, if you arn't worse than a Greek pirate, or a Jew slop-seller! [*Cann aims a blow at Bob, which he dexterously avoids by stooping.*] What, you won't surrender, eh? Then blaze away, my hearty!

[*Music.—Bob rushes upon Cann, and they fight.*]

Bob. [*After a pause.*] Well, have you had enough?—'Cause, if you would like another taste, only just wait till I've cast my jacket adrift. [*As Bob is taking off his jacket, Cann attacks him, and Bob gets away.*] Cowardly ruffian!—So, you'd attack me with my fins in limbo, would you? For that, I shall cry "No quarter!"—Thy life or mine!

[*Music.*]

GRAND COMBAT.

[*Bob is disarmed, and feels for his pistols.*]

Bob. What, no hope?—My pistols gone!—Why did I hand them over to the captain?

[*He hurries about distractedly, and tries in vain to regain his sword.*]

Cann. Surrender!

Bob. Never! [*Rushing desperately upon Cann, and seizing his sword, as he is about to cut him down.*] This for my life!

[*They struggle, and Bob falls with Cann's foot on his breast.*]

Cann. [*Laughing triumphantly.*] Ha! ha! ha! [*Preparing to strike.*] Whose life now—thine or mine?

[*Chord of music*]

Enter FREDERICK DERVANION, suddenly, on the top of the broken steps.

Fre. [*In a very loud voice.*] Thine!

[*He fires a pistol, and Cann falls.*]

Bob. [*Jumping up.*] Huzza! — Three cheers for the captain!

Enter MARY, JULIA, and COLONEL TRAVERS, R. U. E.

Mary. [*Rushing to Cann.*] Oh, my father!

[*She kneels affectionately over him, and endeavours to staunch the blood from his wound, while supported by Bob.*]

Bob. Mary, can you forgive me?

Cann. [*Faintly.*] Yes, yes, she must forgive you. My hour is come. Oh, that I could behold the victim of my dreadful revenge! Oh, Frederick!

Fre. [*Coming forward.*] Who calls on Frederick?

Cann. A wretch who hath wronged him from his cradle. [*Pointing to Colonel Travers.*] Behold your father!

Tra. Yes, my boy, I am indeed your parent!

Cann. [*In agony.*] Frederick, 'twas Heaven's will that I should die. I forgive—nay, I thank you for having saved me from the ignominious fate this wound [*Pointing to his arm.*] would have betrayed me to. [*To Bob.*] You, my brave fellow, love Mary; take her, and may every blessing be yours! [*Bob takes Mary's hand.*] Frederick and Julia, may you ever be happy! [*Colonel Travers joins their hands.*] Now—now I die content!

[*Falls lifeless.*]

DISPOSITION OF THE CHARACTERS AT THE FALL OF THE CURTAIN.

Body of CANN.

TRA. JULIA. FRE.
R.]

MARY. BOB STAY.
[L.]

THE END.

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